

# Surgeon general opens new marijuana fight

United Press International

WASHINGTON — Calling marijuana a "major public health problem," Surgeon General C. Everett Koop urged the nation's doctors yesterday to warn their patients of its dangers and urge them to stop using it.

Koop's statement came only a few weeks after a National Academy of Sciences panel — in a report repudiated by the Reagan administration — urged that marijuana be decriminalized and that its use be treated on the level of a traffic offense.

"Marijuana use is a major public health problem in the United States," Koop said in a statement that will be

published in two widely circulated government public health journals.

Marijuana use among youths has risen 30-fold in the last two decades, with more high school students smoking marijuana than tobacco. More than a quarter of the American population has used it, Koop said.

Koop, citing the government's annual report on marijuana and health sent to Congress in March, said marijuana impaired short-term memory and slowed learning, damaged lung function, led to lower sperm count in men, interfered with ovulation in women and prenatal development, and might affect heart function.

Marijuana remains in body fat for several weeks "with unknown consequences," he said, but "increases the possibilities for chronic effects as well as residual effects on performance" even after the initial "high" has worn off.

Koop said he is "especially con-

cerned" about the drug's effect on growing children and adolescents.

He cited an "amotivational syndrome" — loss of energy, lower grades in school and "harmed parental relationships" — that some experts attribute to the use of marijuana.

## Utah mayor enters plea in shooting of 3 dogs

Associated Press

LAKEPOINT, Utah — Grantsville Mayor J. Keith Brown has pleaded no contest to three misdemeanor charges of cruelty to animals in the shootings of three dogs.

The charges followed an investigation by the attorney's office into allegations that residents' dogs had been picked up by the police and shot to death at a vacant lot owned by the mayor.

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